

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 SCEM-02 FPC-01 INT-08 SAB-01

AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-08 CEA-02 DRC-01

NIC-01 /213 W

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R 240756Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4821

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD VIA POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 15981

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ENRG UR XF

SUBJECT: SOVIET DOUBTS RE OIL BOYCOTT

1. AT MOSCOW CENTRAL HOUSE OF WRITERS DECEMBER 22, INVITATION-ONLY VARIETY EVENING WAS LED OFF BY LECTURE ON WORLD ENERGY CRISIS BY SENIOR STAFF MEMBER OF IMEMO (INSTITUTE OF WORLD ECONOMY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS), RUBEN N. ANDREASYAN. AFTER FACTUAL REVIEW OF IMPACT ON WEST OF FUEL SHORTAGE AND ARAB OIL BOYCOTT, LECTURER REMINDED AUDIENCE THAT SOME ARAB RULERS WERE REACTIONARIES AND DEVOUT MUSLIMS (HE MENTIONED KING FAISAL BY NAME), WHO SAW BOYCOTT AS WAY OF RIDDING MIDDLE EAST OF CONSEQUENCES OF ISRAELI AGGRESSION AND RUSSIAN INFLUENCE SIMULTANEOUSLY.

2. QUOTING ONE ARAB KING TO THE EFFECT THAT NOT ONE DROP OF OIL WOULD FLOW TO THE WEST UNTIL THE GREEN FLAG OF THE PROPHET FLEW AGAIN OVER JERUSALEM'S AL-AQSA MOSQUE, ANDREASYAN NOTED THAT ALL THIS CERTAINLY PROVIDED FOOD
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FOR THOUGHT. PERSONALLY, HE FELT, SUCCESS OF OIL BOYCOTT

WAS RATHER DISTURBING SINCE SUCH TACTICS COULD EASILY IN SOME OTHER SITUATION IN FUTURE BE TURNED AGAINST SOVIET UNION.

3. TO AUDIENCE'S AMUSEMENT, LECTURER REPORTED THAT USSR HAD RAISED ITS EXPORT PRICES ON OIL EXPORT WITH EVERYONE ELSE ("BUT, COMRADES, THIS IS THE WAY THE WORLD MARKET WORKS"). HE ADDED THAT THIS GAIN WAS OFFSET BY HIGHER PRICES WHICH HAD TO BE PAID ON IMPORTS FROM IRAQ. ANDREASYAN CONCLUDED BY REASSURING SOVIET LISTENERS THAT USSR HAD ENOUGH OIL RESERVES TO SATISFY DOMESTIC NEEDS FOR "TENS AND MAYBE EVEN HUNDREDS OF YEARS."

4. COMMENT: WE HAVE HEARD SOVIET DOUBTS ABOUT ARAB OIL BOYCOTT EXPRESSED PRIVATELY, INCLUDING BY ANOTHER IMEMO SPECIALIST WHO SAID THE QUESTION IS UNDER INTENSIVE STUDY AT THE INSTITUTE. HOWEVER, THIS IF FIRST PUBLIC EXPRESSION THAT WE HAVE HEARD OF VIEW THAT BOYCOTT COULD LEAD TO HARM TO USSR INTERESTS. EVENING WAS OPEN ONLY TO MEMBERS OF WRITERS' UNION AND THEIR GUESTS AND FEATURED, INTER ALIA, FIRST PERFORMANCE AFTER LONG STAGE ABSENCE OF POET-SINGER BULAT OKUDZHAVA.SOMMERLATTE

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